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# Where to buy Utah native plants

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Erin's SLC garden in June, with Mexican Hat, yucca, butterflyweed and more. Photo: Erin Alberty/Axios

**It's time for** Utah's spring plant sales, with some of the best chances to bring flora that's native to the state into your backyard.

**Why it matters:** Native plants provide habitat for birds and bugs and generally require less water than traditional landscapes — but they're in critically low supply throughout the mountain west.

**The big picture:** Demand for native plants has soared as western states make re-landscaping a central water conservation policy, but sellers struggle to keep them in stock.

- Desert plants are hard to produce in commercial nurseries, which are typically set up for traditional garden plants with different water schedules and soil conditions.
- They also tend to root deeply, which is why they're drought-tolerant — but also slow to grow. Trees and shrubs may require years of care before they're big enough to sell.

**The bottom line:** Between lag times in growth and an unpredictable supply chain, high demand doesn't guarantee business success.

- In the 15 years or so that I've been gardening with native plants, I've seen many of Utah's go-to nurseries leave the industry.

**Yes, but:** Others have germinated in fallow ground. **Here are some good sources specializing in native plants:**

**Cache Valley Native Plants** is a major grower — and they're hauling the goods to South Salt Lake for a **one-day sale Saturday**.

**Red Butte Gardens** hosts plant sales in the spring and fall, with the next one open to the public on **May 9**.

- **Native plants sell so fast** that I **pay for a garden membership** just to get into the **members-only sale the day before.**

**Wasatch Community Gardens:** The spring plant sale May 9 includes native grasses and flowers for landscaping.

**Native Utah Plants** in Provo is worth the drive, with a detailed online inventory full of hard-to-find treasures.

**Beehive Nursery and Gardens** in Kamas is a growing business, with thousands of hardy starts grown from seed.

**High Country Gardens** is based in Clinton and only takes online orders for its selection of thousands of specimens.

**Many other local nurseries** sell quite a few native plants alongside other ornamentals. Check out:

- **Progressive Plants**
- **Growing Empire** — yes, it's open, despite its subdued online presence
- **Cactus & Tropicals**
- **Glover Nursery**
- **Twin Pines Nursery**
- **Millcreek Gardens**